ACT V. SCENE I. The Same. Before TIMON'S Cave.

Enter Poet and Painter; TIMON behind, unseen.*

PAIN. As I took note of the place, it cannot be far where he abides.

3 *Enter* POET *and* PAINTEB;] The Poet and the Painter were within view when Apemantus parted from Timon, and might then have seen Timon, since Apemantus, standing by him could see them: But the scenes of the Thieves and Steward have passed before their arrival, and yet passed, as the drama is now conducted, within their view. It might be suspected, that some scenes are transposed, for all these difficulties would be removed by introducing the Poet and Painter first, and the Thieves in this place. Yet *I* am afraid the scenes must keep their present order, for the Painter alludes to the Thieves, when he says, " he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity." This impropriety is now heightened by placing the thieves in one Act, and the Poet and Painter in another: but it must be remembered, that in the original edition this play is not divided into separate Acts, so that the present distribution is arbitrary, and may be changed if any convenience can be gained, or impropriety obviated by alteration. JOHNSON.

In the immediately preceding scene, Flavius, Timon's steward, has a conference with his master, and receives gold from him. Between this and the present scene, a single minute cannot be supposed to pass; and yet the Painter tells his companion: — " Tis said he gave *his steward* a mighty sum."— Where was it said ? Why in Athens, whence, it must therefore seem, they are but newly come. Here then should be fixed the commencement of the fifth Act, in order to allow time for Flavius to return to the city, and for rumour to publish his adventure with Timon. But how are we in this case to account for Apemantus's announcing the approach of the Poet and Painter in the last scene of the preceding Act, and before the Thieves appear ? It is possible, that when this play was abridged for representation, all between this passage, and the entrance of the Poet and Painter, may have been omitted by the players, and these words put into the mouth of Apemantus to introduce them; and that when it was published at large, the interpolation was unnoticed. Or, if we allow the Poet and Painter to see Apemantus, it may be conjectured that they did not think his presence necessary at their in-